THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Many State Governments including Gujarat have requested for making additional allocation of foodgrains to cover all ration card holders identified as BPL families by them. Government of Gujarat has identified 33.90 lakh BPL families as against the estimated number of 21.20 lakh BPL families projected as on 1.3.2000.

(c) and (d) The allocation of foodgrains for BPL families under the TPDS is being made as per the poverty estimates of the Planning Commission for the year 1993-94 based on the methodology of the Expert Group on Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor. The population base of 1995 for the estimation of BPL families at the time of introduction of the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) has been changed to 1.3.2000 *w.e.f.* December, 2000, thereby increasing the total number of BPL families from 596.23 lakhs to 652.03 lakhs at the national level. This basis has been applied to all States/Union Territories without exception. It is, therefore, not possible to accede to the requests received from the State Governments to increase the allocation of foodgrains as per the number of BPL families identified by them.

**Mounting Stocks of Sugar**

1959. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the 'Times of India' dated the 28th January, 2002 under the caption "State sugar industry reels under mounting stocks"; and

(b) if so, what is Government's response thereto and what corrective steps have been taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In order to reduce sugar stock, the Government has reduced the levy sugar obligation of the factories from 15% to 10% *w.e.f.* 1.3.2002. Besides, to reduce the sugar stock held by the factories, the following steps have been taken by the Central Government.

(i) Levy exemption has been given on the quantity of sugar exported.

(ii) The quantity of sugar exported is treated as advance free sale release and is adjusted after a period of 18 months from the date of release.

(iii) Duty Entitlement Pass Book (DEPB) @5% value of F.O.B. price of sugar has been allowed.

(iv) Quantitative ceiling on export of sugar has been removed.

(v) Advance of freesale sugar is made under the prescribed guidelines subject to adjustment and 5% levy obligations to needy sugar mills to enable them to clear cane price dues of the farmers and to reduce their stocks. Besides, the factories have been allowed to sell upto 10% of their quarterly quota over and above their normal quota to clear their cane price dues.

(vi) A quantity of 1,62,631 MTs, out of 2000-2001 season of unlifted levy sugar stocks was permitted as free sale sugar as a measure of temporary relief.

**Fetification of Sugar with Vitamin-A**

1960. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA:
SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that almost half of the population suffers from micronutrient deficiency of Vitamin-A, iron and iodine;